

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

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R 281315Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3086

INFO AMVXBASSY ADDIS ABABA 5912

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE NAIROBI 4336

LONDON FOR HAVERKAMP

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT PINS KE

SUBJ: KENYATTA COUNTERS CRITICS WITH LOYALTY RALLIES AND
POLICE ACTION THAT CLOSES UNIVERSITY

REF: NAIROBI 3558, 3406 AND 2407

1. THROUGHOUT MAY PRESIDENT KENYATTA HAS BEEN RECEIVING WELL-PUBLICIZED POLITICAL DELEGATIONS COMING TO PLEDGE THEIR LOYALTY AND ADDRESSING MASSIVE LOYALTY RALLIES DESIGNED: (1) TO DEMONSTRATE THAT DESPITE THE KARIUKI MURDER HE IS VERY MUCH IN CHARGE AND HAS THE GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE BEHIND HIM; (2) TO REPAIR THE DAMAGE DONE TO KIKUYU UNITY BY THE MURDER AND (3) TO DISCREDIT THE PARLIAMENTARY SELECT COMMITTEE INVESTIGATING THE MURDER AND LESSEN THE IMPACT OF THE COMMITTEE'S REPORT, NOW EXPECTED NEXT WEEK (CONVENIENTLY AFTER THE MADARAKA DAY NATIONAL HOLIDAY). EVEN IF THESE TACTICS HAVE NOT RESTORED KENYATTA'S PERSONAL PRESTIGE OR DONE MORE THAN
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PAPER OVER INTRA-KIKUYU DIFFERENCES, THEY HAVE COWED THE

PRESIDENT'S OPPONENTS AND MADE IT EVEN LESS LIKELY THAT THE SELECT COMMITTEE WILL DIRECTLY CHALLENGE HIS AUTHORITY BY DETAILING ITS SUSPICIONS OF HIGH-LEVEL INVOLVEMENT IN THE KARIUKI MURDER.

2. FOR STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI (THE ONE REMAINING CENTER OF VOCAL OPPOSITION NOW THAT ORGANIZED LABOR HAS BEEN MOMENTARILY PACIFIED BY THE WAGE INCREASES ANNOUNCED MAY 1), THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE WAS SPELLED OUT EVEN MORE CLEARLY IN A SERIES OF POLICE ACTIONS AGAINST STUDENT MEETINGS ON MAY 24 AND 26 THAT LEFT MANY INJURED, 94 ARRESTED ON CHARGES OF QUOTE RIOTING UNQUOTE IN DEFIANCE OF THE PRESIDENTIAL BAN AND THE UNIVERSITY CLOSED INDEFINITELY FOR THE SECOND TIME IN LESS THAN A YEAR. THE STUDENTS HAD ASSEMBLED PEACEABLY MAY 24 TO PROTEST THE CREATION OF A UNIVERSITY BRANCH OF THE GIKUYU-EMBU-MERU ASSOCIATION (GEMA-A KIKUYU DOMINATED QUOTE SOCIAL-WELFARE SOCIETY UNQUOTE THAT HAS TAKEN ON ADDED POLITICAL OVERTONES BY ORGANIZING MANY OF OVF RECENT LOYALTY RALLIES). WHEN THIS MEETING WAS BROKEN UP AND SEVERAL STUDENTS ARRESTED BY THE POLICE, ANOTHER MEETING WAS CALLED MAY 26. THIS WAS IN TURN FORCIBLY DISPERSED BY THE RIOT POLICE (REINFORCED BY A CONTINGENT OF THE PARAMILITARY GENERAL SERVICES UNIT) WHICH FIRED WARNING SHOTS AND QUANTITIES OF TEAR GAS IN CLEARING THE CAMPUS AND THEN FOR THE NEXT FOUR HOURS CONTINUED TO CHASE GROUPS OF ANGRY, ROCK-LADEN STUDENTS.

3. ON MAY 27 UNIVERSITY AUTHORITIES ANNOUNCED THAT BECAUSE OF THE QUOTE UNSETTLED SITUATION UNQUOTE, IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE FOR NORMAL ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES TO CONTINUE AND THAT THE UNIVERSITY WOULD THEREFORE BE CLOSED QUOTE UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE UNQUOTE. SOME OBSERVERS SUSPECT THE GOVERNMENT CLOSED THE UNIVERSITY TO FORESTALL ANY POSSIBILITY OF EMBARRASSING STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS WHILE THE PRESIDENT IS ADDRESSING THE JUNE 1 MADARAKA DAY CELEBRATIONS.

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